



# Hopton Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 107665  
**LEA** Kirklees  
**Inspection number** 285496  
**Inspection dates** 22 May 2006 to 23 May 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Sonja Oyen HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Woodend Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Lower Hopton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Mirfield, West Yorkshire WF14 8PR
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01924 326 600
<b>Number on roll</b>	220	<b>Fax number</b>	01924 326 601
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs L Swire
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 June 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr A Blakeley

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 22 May 2006 - 23 May 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 285496
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Hopton is an average sized primary school in the town of Mirfield. Many of the families have a long association with the school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average.

There are seven classes; one has pupils from Years 1 and 2. The large class of Year 4 pupils is split into two groups for lessons in English and mathematics. In the Foundation Stage unit, 40 pupils, aged three and four years old attend part time. There are seven full time four year olds.

Nearly all the pupils are of white British heritage and none has English as an additional language. In general, pupils' attainment is slightly lower than expected for their age on entry to the Nursery. In the school overall, six pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities and one pupil has a Statement of special educational need.

In November 2004, an inspection judged the school to require special measures. HMI have visited the school each term to judge the progress made in dealing with the key issues. Following the resignation of the headteacher in December 2004, the deputy headteacher continued as acting headteacher until the substantive headteacher took up the post in April 2005. There have been several changes and disruption to staffing because of absence and resignation. During the inspection, four temporary teachers were working in the school.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Hopton is now giving its pupils a satisfactory education and providing satisfactory value for money. In his first year, the headteacher has accelerated

the pace of change and strengthened the quality of every aspect of the school's work. He has been the key in turning the school round. The complacency and underachievement evident in 2004 have gone and Hopton now has much to celebrate in what it provides and what the pupils gain from it. There is a good team spirit, renewed confidence and a shared commitment; pupils, staff, governors and parents are 'aiming high and helping to create the future'.

Standards are just above average and on the rise. Pupils want to reach their targets and higher attaining pupils are starting to show what they can do. The quality of teaching has strengthened; although satisfactory overall, there is inconsistency between year groups and subjects. Several year groups benefit from consistently good and often outstanding teaching which moves their learning on at a good rate. Pupils work hard particularly in practical tasks or when discussing ideas with a partner. There are times, however, when they are unsure of exactly what to do and when the task is not matched well enough to their abilities. The increased focus on developing pupils' skills is plugging gaps in previous learning. This is most marked at Key Stage 2 where many pupils are beginning to shine in writing, solving mathematical problems, using different computer programs and in carrying out scientific investigations. The youngest pupils get off to a flying start because the adults provide a wide range of exciting, challenging activities, indoors and out, and know how to meet each pupil's needs. The curriculum has widened and is satisfactory with many good elements, not least the developing range of music, drama and art activities. Effective use is made of visits to support the pupils' learning and pupils have opportunities to attend clubs, to take part in sporting activities and to go on residential visits. Pupils get on well together; they are friendly, willing and very enthusiastic about the changes that have made their school a fun place. They know their views count in the decisions about how to make Hopton even better.

Leadership and management are now good overall and the school is well placed to build on the firm foundations laid over the last few terms. The headteacher gives a very strong lead in all aspects of the school's work. He has an accurate view of its strengths and areas for improvement. While Key Stage leaders have successfully fostered greater consistency of practice, they are still new to pinpointing exactly what needs to be done to raise standards further. The supportive governing body is well informed but is reliant on others to decide how well the school is doing and how resources ought to be used.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

To raise standards further across the curriculum, the school should:

- share best practice in order to strengthen the quality of teaching and learning
- ensure that tasks are matched even more closely to pupils' differing needs
- strengthen expertise in using information about the work of the school and pupils' performance to specify what needs to be done next.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

In 2004, the pupils' achievement was judged to be unsatisfactory. This is no longer the case although there is still inconsistency between year groups and subjects. Where the teaching is strong, the pupils achieve well in lessons and over time. Pupils in Year 4, for example, have not only made up lost ground but also steamed ahead especially in reading and writing; many are now doing as well as pupils a year or two older. Standards are just above average in English, mathematics and science. In other subjects, standards are broadly satisfactory but rising in line with the teachers' higher expectations of what pupils can do.

The youngest pupils get off to a flying start because the adults phase the learning and provide practical experiences to develop and consolidate their knowledge and skills in all six curricular areas. With adult guidance, the pupils often achieve high standards; their renditions of Monet's painting of water lilies were stunning. The vast majority move into Year 1 as confident budding artists, readers, writers, mathematicians and scientists. By the end of Year 2, nearly all reach the level expected for their age and a good proportion exceed it. The school is on track to sustain the good Key Stage 1 results of 2005 and 2004.

The Year 6 pupils also did well in 2005. The school had its best results ever, especially in science where all the Year 6 pupils attained the level expected for their age. Hopton outshone similar schools in Kirklees. Nevertheless, few pupils did really well in mathematics or in English, where their writing let them down. The systematic teaching of skills has boosted the pupils' learning especially in writing, solving mathematical problems and applying their scientific knowledge. The legacy of gaps in learning from previous years is diminishing and higher attaining pupils are starting to show what they can do. In some lessons, the challenge is too low for the more able and too taxing for those who find learning hard to succeed on their own. Good support from adults and other pupils helps those with particular needs to do their best, and additional sessions are aiding pupils who have not made enough progress to catch up.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The pupils' enthusiasm and self assurance have blossomed with the increased focus on ensuring that all do well personally and academically. Pupils of all ages talked glowingly about their enjoyment in doing 'fun things'. Year 6 pupils said how much they welcomed the redecoration of the school, the influx of interesting visitors, the residential trip to Ingleborough Hall and the chance they now have to be involved in school and community affairs. In reflecting on the recent tests, they expressed a

genuine appreciation of how lessons had helped them to organise their thinking and tackle the questions with confidence.

The youngest pupils quickly develop a very positive attitude to work. Their willingness to listen, try and cooperate typifies pupils in all year groups. Regular attendance and good behaviour are the norm. The pupils know the school's six golden rules are for the good of all. Boys and girls of different ages and backgrounds play and work well together. They help one another to make sensible decisions such as eating healthily at lunchtime. They feel secure and confident in talking to staff about any problems. One pupil's comment that, 'We're all friends' sums up the school perfectly. The pupils are proud to see their work on display and to be mentioned in the 'golden book'. They rise to the occasion when given responsibility and show a developing social conscience when asked for their views. School councillors posed mature questions when helping to interview applicants for a teaching post and put a good case for the zoning of the playground in the interests of safety. Pupils are also gaining financial acumen in raising funds to sponsor two children in Ethiopia.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

In 2004, teaching and learning were judged to be unsatisfactory. They have improved and are now satisfactory with many good elements. The teaching of the deputy headteacher and Key Stage leaders is good and often outstanding. That for the youngest pupils is particularly effective. The Foundation Stage unit team is creative and very skilful, especially in developing pupils' language and independence. The highly organised and thoughtful, systematic planning of activities is rooted in the team's detailed observations of each pupil's progress.

Throughout the school, the staff have gained in confidence to try different ways of working and show increasing flair in providing experiences that catch pupils' interest and take their learning on. Professional development and the sharing of best practice have been very beneficial in:

- heightening the use of praise and encouragement
- creating vibrant classrooms with eye catching displays that support pupils' learning as well as celebrate their achievements
- breaking the teaching into small steps to secure pupils' learning
- making effective use of practical activities, including role play, talk partners and work on small whiteboards to engage all the pupils
- giving pupils clear comments on how well they have done and what they need to do next time to improve
- encouraging support staff to make best use of their expertise.

As a result, the pupils find learning exciting and profitable. For example, older pupils know to look at the punctuation pyramid on the classroom wall to help them in their writing and have learnt how to plan their work. Nevertheless, there is still work to do

to iron out inconsistencies in the quality of teaching between classes and in subjects where there are gaps in teachers' knowledge. Some lessons start well but lose impetus and focus. The work sometimes is too taxing for those who find learning hard and sometimes too easy for the higher attaining pupils.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum has widened and has many good aspects. The gaps in the curriculum for religious education and information and communication technology (ICT) have been filled and there is a better balance between developing pupils' skills and subject knowledge. The specialist expertise of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is strengthening the provision in physical education, drama and music. Visitors and visits add to pupils' experience. The Foundation Stage curriculum uses themes very successfully to thread through the activities indoors and out. This creative approach is developing in other classes and some links between subjects, including art and music, have led to good quality work. Lunchtime and after school clubs and activities provide opportunities for pupils of different ages to acquire new skills, such as playing the recorder, and also to tend the school garden, take part in team games and compete against other schools. Pupils have learnt some French. The purchase of new books and refurbishment of the library has boosted junior pupils' interest in reading. The introduction of 'big writing day' has raised the profile and quality of writing throughout the school. Support staff are doing a good job in using national programmes to help those pupils who need an extra push in reading. The increased coherence in the curriculum is reflected in the weekly themes for assemblies which link closely with 'the six golden rules' and pupils' personal development.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Parents rightly value what has been done to make the school a happier place for their children. Through newsletters and the parents' forum, the headteacher has kept parents informed about the reasons behind the changes and sought their views and help. As a result, there is a stronger, caring Hopton family and community. All the adults show concern for the pupils and their welfare. The ease with which the youngest pupils settle reflects the good systems to introduce them to school. There is good support for pupils with learning difficulties and a sound start has been made to provide help for pupils whose progress has faltered. Procedures have been tightened to ensure the pupils' safety and protection yet allow them freedom to make the most of the environment, especially the good outdoor facilities. There are effective links with support agencies. A good example is the liaison with local police as part of the programme to alert older pupils in how to stay safe. Although the Foundation Stage team keep detailed records of each pupil, the school has only recently developed systems to track pupils' progress through to the end of Year 6. As the teachers' judgements about pupils' attainment have become more accurate, pupils have been given sharper targets and help in how to improve.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The quality of leadership and management is now good - a marked change compared with 2004 when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. The school is well placed to improve further. The headteacher's leadership is very good; his clear direction, positive encouragement, support and example, have helped to lift morale and quicken the pace of change. He has devolved responsibility as others' expertise has grown. He knows what needs to be done and has not shied from taking difficult, reasoned decisions to prevent overspending. The deputy headteacher has given a good lead in developing the quality of teaching in writing and is beginning to focus more sharply on specific aspects. Although the Key Stage leaders have successfully fostered greater consistency of classroom practice, they lack depth of expertise in pinpointing exactly what needs to be done to raise standards further. The regular review of progress by the headteacher and chair of governors has been highly beneficial in keeping the governing body well informed. It is supportive but does not use available information critically to decide how well the school is doing and how resources ought to be used to meet pupils' needs. The local authority (LA) has provided good support and guidance in all aspects of the school's work. Staff have received valuable advice in how to improve and how to introduce effective systems and practices. The school is now in a strong position to work with the LA to tailor support closely to identified priorities and refine practice.



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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	NA
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

You will know that I have been visiting your school each term since May 2005 to see how well you are getting on. This time I brought Mr Painter to show him how much has changed. Thank you for telling us about Hopton. Here are some things we like about your school. You'll see that many are things you like too.

- Hopton is a friendly school. You all get on and support one another.
- Everywhere is bright and there are some super displays of your work.
- Learning is fun especially when your teachers give you exciting things to do.
- You try hard, behave very sensibly and enjoy yourselves!
- The Nursery and Reception year children do some very interesting things. Have you seen their versions of Monet's water lilies?
- Big writing day has helped you all to get better at writing. You are also getting quite clever in solving number problems!
- Your school councillors are really helping Mr Blakeley to make the school a better place. The zoning of the playground was a good idea.
- Mr Blakeley is very good at his job. He knows exactly what else needs to be done to help you to be the best you can.

Hopton is a much better school than it was a year ago. Mr Blakeley and Mrs Swire no longer need me to help them so this was my last visit. I am sure that you are keen to play your bit in 'aiming high and helping to create the future', so you might like to think how you can help Mr Blakeley, Mrs Swire, the other governors and all the staff to do the following things.

- Make sure that your teachers know what helps you to learn best so that they can share ideas and be even better teachers.
- Give you things to do that are not too easy and not too hard but still make you think!
- Become more clever in looking at how well you are doing and in deciding what they need to do to help you to achieve your best.

Thank you for being so welcoming when I was in your school. It has been a pleasure to visit and see how things have moved on. All the best for the future!